STORMWATCH: TEAM ACHILLES #21

"FAMILY TRADEMARK"

by

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StormWatch: Team Achilles
#21 “Family Trademark”
Written by Micah Ian Wright
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PAGE 1

PANEL ONE

Angle on Giovanni Medici, bullet hole square in his forehead, a thin trail of blood leaking from his head.

SANTINI (CAPTION)
So... what’s it going to be?

PANEL TWO

Wide angle on the scene. Santini sits in his chair, staring at The Merovingian. The Merovingian points a finger at Santini. The rich guys around the table are paralyzed. The StormWatchers cover everyone with Skorpions, Uzis and MP-5’s.

SANTINI
Put up or shut up?

MEROVINGIAN
The powers of MY FATHER are not parlor tricks for your amusement!

SANTINI
Well. I guess it’s shut up, then.

PANEL THREE

Small panel. Santini points a gun right at camera.

SANTINI
So long, Gauserand de Montpesant de Molay. descendent of Theoderic, Dagobert, Clovis, and before them, the Word Made Flesh.

MEROVINGIAN
WAIT!

PAGE 2

PANEL ONE

The Merovingian looks down, humiliated.

MEROVINGIAN
I will do as you ask. Not for you, but for for my friend, Giovanni.

PANEL TWO

Merovingian grabs a handful of earth out of a flowerpot behind the table.

MEROVINGIAN
But know this...I will make you pay for this effrontery, Santini.

PANEL THREE

Santini smirks.

SANTINI
You let ME worry about that, okay? Now make with the parlor tricks.

PANEL FOUR

The Merovingian leans the dead Giovanni Medici forward into his spaghetti. The back of Medici’s head is blown outwards, leaving a jagged hole about the size of a fist.

MEROVINGIAN
This is a sacrilege.

SANTINI (OFFSCREEN)
Just tell yourself that it’s either him or you. Or rather, him AND you.

PANEL FIVE

The Merovingian pours the dirt from his hand into the back of Medici’s head.

MEROVINGIAN
Arise, Giovanni!

PAGE 3

PANEL ONE

Medici's body arcs extremely backward in his chair as if being electrified. His thrashing knocks over the table, throwing dishes to the sides. His eyes are bugging out of his head, frothing spit out of his mouth.

Everyone in the room is pretty amazed/scared/thrilled.

NO DIALOG

PANEL TWO

Reaction shot on Santini. His ice-cold exterior is broken. He actually raises an eyebrow in curiousity.

NO DIALOG

PANEL THREE

Medici slumped in his chair, alive and well... or as well as a guy who's been shot in the face can be. He looks like someone soaked him in lemon juice and wrung him out to dry. The Merovingian stands behind him, his hand on his shoulder.

MEDICI
Wha...

MEROVINGIAN
Don't speak my friend... just relax. You've been through a regrettable experience...

PANEL FOUR

Santini leans forward and points a finger at Medici.

SANTINI
No, forget that. Start talking, Medici, or you'll go through a similar experience.

PANEL FIVE

Medici looks at Santini with a horrified look in his eyes. He pats his forehead where the bullet went in.

MEDICI
You... Oh God, you SHOT ME! What kind of a monster are you?

MEROVINGIAN
You have a lot to answer for, Colonel Santini. You are my invited guest and yet you show up with an army and shoot my friends-

PAGE 4

PANEL ONE

Santini calm.

SANTINI
Friends? You've got some interesting friends, Gauserand. Why don't you ask your good buddy Giovanni here about his secret motto: *Pro Fide, Pro Utilitate Hominum.*

PANEL TWO

Merovingian looks at Medici. His eyes are narrowed, he's pissed.

MEROVINGIAN
Malta? YOU?

MEDICI
It's not my fault! They MADE me! I did it to help you... to spy on them for YOU!

MEROVINGIAN
And you lie? You look ME in the eye and you lie?

PANEL THREE

Down on his knees, Giovanni begs for his life.

MEDICI
Nononono... you've got to believe me! I-

PANEL FOUR

Merovingian's eyes crackle with electricity as he slaps Medici across the face.

SOUND E/FX
Kzzzzkkkaaak!

PANEL FIVE

Medici's body lies on the ground, burnt to a crisp. His clothes aren't affected by the intensive fire which burnt him from the inside out.

NO DIALOG

PAGE 5

PANEL ONE

Merovingian stares at his group of rich-guy friends.

MEROVINGIAN
Who else? Which others of you lurk in my busom hoping for your 30 pieces of silver?

SANTINI
Barak? Can you set the man’s mind at ease for him? Who else here is spying on him for The Knights of Malta?

PANEL TWO

Barak points at three guys. The Merovingian looks at the men. Everyone around them is crowding away from them, stumbling over themselves to not be near them.

BARAK
Him... him and him.

MEROVINGIAN
This is a sad day for the Priory. A day which the Knights of Malta will come to eternally regret.

MURDOCH
No, my Teacher! It’s a lie! We are true to your cause!

PANEL THREE

The Merovingian waves his hands and the three men drop dead, their skin on fire, but not a normal red fire, a weird sickly green flame.

MEROVINGIAN
Be silent.

PANEL FOUR

Santini and the Merovingian, both standing.

MEROVINGIAN
I understand you now... your methods. I apologize for my words earlier.

SANTINI
No problem. I apologize for doubting your power and your word.

5 CONTINUED:

MEROVINGIAN
I must retreat to safe ground now. My business affairs agents will be in touch with you about the funds you will need.

PANEL FIVE

Small panel. Santini looks at the Merovingian.

SANTINI
You haven’t told me what the job involves yet.

MEROVINGIAN
The excitement disrupted my presentation. The job is simple, and if you accomplish it, you and your team will be offered permanent employment.

PANEL SIX

Small panel. C/U on the Merovingian.

MEROVINGIAN
I need you to kill my Brother.

PAGE 6

PANEL ONE

Santini and Barak walk down the Spiral Staircase of Bovolo (see reference page at end of script for TONS of shots of this magnificent structure).

Draw a full-page panel which has all five floors of the stairway. Pose out the characters on different floors of the stairs as we go from "panel" to "panel."

You can break the "panels: up with a white bar between each floor or not, depending on your preference.

BARAK
Sir, it would be illuminating if you could tell me what that was all about.

SANTINI
Simply put, we just met Gauserand de Montpesant de Molay, descendedant of Theoderic, Dagobert, Clovis, and before them, the Word Made Flesh. He's the Merovingian, the Heir to Christ and he needs our help.

PANEL TWO

SANTINI
And if you believe that, I've got a tower in Paris I can sell you for scrap.

BARAK
I wasn't sure if I should believe him.

PANEL THREE

SANTINI
What kind of read did you get off of him?

BARAK
Nothing... it was like scanning you. Blank.

SANTINI
And the others at the meeting?

PANEL FOUR

BARAK
Open books. You hit all of the key-phrase codewords perfectly.

BARAK
(quoting Santini from last issue - italics?)
"Vast sums of money, a list of political contacts, People whom you trust implicitly."

6 CONTINUED:

BARAK
At each prompting they gave it all up subconsciously. No way I could have remembered everything from that many people, so I just dumped it into Jaeger's long-term memory. Tefibi and I will decode it when I get back to the hotel.

PANEL FIVE

Santini pats Barak on the back as they exit the stairway.

SANTINI
And the three you pointed out as Traitors to his fanciness?

BARAK
I did as you asked... I fingered the three MOST loyal to him. It was quite a trick, sir.

SANTINI
Would you like to know why I did it?

BARAK
I know better than to ask.

PAGE 7

PANEL ONE

Santini and Barak walk down the street in Venice. Behind them, Galena, Pinckney and Jaeger walk, still in their waiters uniforms, looking skywards for snipers, checking out pedestrians for suspicious movements, looking into baby carriages, etc. (change what they're looking at in each panel).

SANTINI
I want this guy isolated and easy to control. These Illuminati-types have been playing at internecine warfare for a long time. We're coming to this party 2000 years late.

PANEL TWO

Barak shrugs. Behind him, Jaeger eyeballs a gondoleer lounging at the side of the river.

BARAK
He has an awesome power level. It's possible that he truly is the heir to Christ...

SANTINI
Okay. Let's pretend he is. Him and his Daddy and his Daddy before him. If these guys are all the children of Christ, and if they're so good, then why is the world so fucked?

PANEL THREE

Barak protests. Santini shrugs. Galena shoulders aside a woman with a Pekinese dog.

BARAK
But we just saw him bring a dead man back to life. It was more than a bit reminiscent of Lazarus.

SANTINI
Big Deal. We've got a guy locked inside Project Entry who managed to bring entire armies of dead people back to life. Not as well as de Molay did, but that's the difference between retail and wholesale, isn't it?

PANEL FOUR

Santini steps aside for an elderly man...

SANTINI
I'm not impressed by Superpowers. Whether 2000 years ago or today.
(MORE)

7 CONTINUED:

SANTINI (cont'd)

All it proves to me is that Super Powered Beings haven't changed one bit... they've been manipulating their powers over Humanity as far back as we can trace written history.

PANEL FIVE

...and Pinckney searches the man's pockets behind Santini.

SANTINI

Luckily for our side, for every Grendel, there's a Beowulf.

BARAK

And you see yourself as Beowulf?

SANTINI

Scan this answer loud and clear, Barak. I don't want all SPBs dead... only the ones who use their powers in a way which I think is exploitative. And this Merovingian Prick?

PANEL SIX

Small inset panel. Closer shot on Santini for a shit-eating Grin.

SANTINI

He's a prime example of some SPB who uses his powers only to enrich himself. I may end up working WITH HIM... but only if I can't find a way to make his monkey ass work FOR ME.

PAGE 8

PANEL ONE

Big panel. Establishing shot of the small island on the way to Burano (see reference page).

TEFIBI (O.S.)
That island over there is where the Target lives.

PANEL TWO

Reverse shot. The SW:TA team is in a rented Tourist boat (a real 20-foot boat, NOT a gondola or a powerboat), dressed in tacky tourist clothes (shorts, Hawaiian shirts, baseball hats, sunglasses). They all stare towards camera watching the off panel island. Flint lounges behind Santini, one hand inside his half-unbuttoned shirt, rubbing his chest.

SANTINI
Perimeter?

TEFIBI
Any closer than this and the boat would be torpedoed out of the water. Behind those scrub pines they've got ground-to-air missiles for taking out any Helicopters. Underwater nets for divers.

TEFIBI
I gotta hand it to them, they've got the entire island sealed up tight. Then again, if the Great-grandson of Jesus wanted me dead, I'd be a bit paranoid as well.

SANTINI
Any information on the target? Does he appear outdoors? De Molay was careless enough to meet with us on a rooftop.

PANEL THREE

Pinckney throws his hand up in the air, irritated. Galena hands him a Tourist drink with a tiny umbrella in it.

PINCKNEY
Evidently not, sir. Galena and I have squatted about on a variety of boats for the better part of the last week and we haven't seen a singular trace of him.

PAGE 9

PANEL ONE

Galena talks. In the background, Pinckney takes a swig of his drink.

GALENA
Satellite photography shows a Villa built on a Moorish design. He has a huge courtyard in there to sunbathe in.

PANEL TWO

In the BG, Pinckney claws at his throat, a horrified look on his face.

GALENA
I think he will not soon be coming within gunfire range.

PINCKNEY
(small type)
What was that?

GALENA
Straight Vodka. Too raw for you, my sweet?

PANEL THREE

Santini grins as he sits next to Tefibi. Tefibi uses his alien laptop with the 3-D imaging display. It shows a man's head rotating in 3 dimensions between he and Santini. The man looks like the great-great-(x45)-grandson of Jesus, long hair, pulled back from the forehead. He should look like THIS guy, but with a light brown-ish goatee:

http://www.hbo.com/films/angelsinamerica/img/photos/photo_prior_justice.jpg

The idea here is to make him look as much like Jesus as possible, but a rich, creepy, evil Jesus.

TEFIBI
This is him. He goes by the name Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal.

SANTINI
He doesn't look like de Molay's brother.

TEFIBI
That's because he's not. De Molay sent over a family tree tracing them both back. The two families diverged back in 1415 after the Battle of Agincourt.

9 CONTINUED:

PANEL FOUR

Over the shoulder shot as Santini and Flint look out at the island.

FLINT
600 years of bad blood. No wonder the whole family wants each other dead.

SANTINI
Oh, Baby! That's it!

PANEL FIVE

Flint, Santini & Tefibi. Flint's puzzled, Tefbi rolls his eyes. Santini grins evil.

FLINT
What's What?

SANTINI
You just told me how we get Juan José out of his Jesus Bunker.

TEFIBI
I feel a Cunning Plan coming on.

SANTINI
The cunningest. It's a masterwork of Cunning. Here's what we do: we invite him to a party. A family get together.

PAGE 10

PANEL ONE

Small panel. C/U on the Merovingian.

MEROVINGIAN
I don’t understand.

PANEL TWO

Big panel, establishing shot.

The Merovingian’s Home. Make it as posh as you can possibly stand to look at. Something newish, though... like some freaky thing out of Architectural Digest. A place where people aren’t supposed to live... only exhibit for magazine photos.

Santini and Barak sit talking to the Merovingian. In the background, two heavies in suits stand guard over the Merovingian.

SANTINI
There’s no way to get in at him. That island is impenetrable to anything less than a infantry company, and you can’t afford that kind of exposure. People would ask questions.

MEROVINGIAN
Your plan sounds full of exposure as well. Exposing ME to possible harm.

SANTINI
HE has to believe he can harm YOU or else he’s not coming out where WE can harm HIM. He knows you and the Priory have set up camp on his doorstep. He intends to merely out wait you behind his fortress walls.

PANEL THREE

The Merovingian rubs his chin.

MEROVINGIAN
Couldn’t we bomb his home to rubble? We have connections in military organizations the World over.

SANTINI
No dice. Who knows how many sub-basements he has there? He’d just emerge unscathed and YOU would still have millions of questions out there about why the Italian Air Force bombed one of the islands of the Venice lagoon.

SANTINI
No, I’m sorry, but my plan is the only way.

10 CONTINUED:

PANEL FOUR

The Merovingian gives in. You can tell he’s not happy about it.

MEROVINGIAN
Very well. We shall implement your stratagem.

SANTINI
Good. We’ll need one of your bodyguard’s guns.

PAGE 11

PANEL ONE

The Merovingian’s eyes narrow in suspicion. He makes a small hand gesture. In the background, the two bodyguards stiffen and make like they’re about to pull out their guns and start shooting (hands in the vest, frowns, etc.).

MEROVINGIAN

Why?

PANEL TWO

Santini smiles and holds up his empty hands.

SANTINI

Relax. You’ve been in range of these for the last ten minutes. If I wanted you dead, you’d be dead. We need a gun to make this look real, that’s all.

PANEL THREE

The Merovingian gestures again. The bodyguards relax.

MEROVINGIAN

Very well. Lars. Loan Colonel Santini your weapon.

PANEL FOUR

Lars the bodyguard stands next to Santini and Barak. Make Lars look like Vinnie Jones. Lars has the cylinder of his revolver open and is shaking the shells into his palm.

Santini shakes his head, grinning.

SANTINI

Ten minutes. Any time. Nothing you could have done.

PANEL FIVE

The bodyguard hands the weapon to SANTINI, Butt-First.

SANTINI

Thanks. Okay. Let’s get started.

PANEL SIX

Santini grabs The Merovingian by the throat and shoves the gun into his temple while Barak films it all with a small camcorder.

MEROVINGIAN

Unhand me, swine!

11 CONTINUED:

SANTINI

Shut Up. This is a recorded message for Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal. My name is Colonel Ben Santini, former Weatherman of StormWatch. I have something you want. Follow my instructions to the letter and you can have it. For a small fee, of course.

PAGE 12

PANEL ONE

Big Panel, establishing shot.

Midnight at the Doge's Palace. View of the empty square with the columned arches stretching away from camera (see the reference page for some great shots).

Halfway across the square, Barak walks towards camera, alone. He holds an envelope in his hand.

BARAK (CAPTION)
So WHAT is this thing?

SANTINI (CAPTION)
It used to be a drop-off point for informers. You'd write down the names of your enemies and the crimes you wanted to report them for and the Inquisistion would round them up.

BARAK (CAPTION)
Oh. Government by Snitch. Sounds fantastic.

PANEL TWO

Barak pauses before the Mouth of the Betrayers (see the reference page). The creepy thing stares out at us in the moonlight.

BARAK (CAPTION)
Does it still work?

SANTINI (CAPTION)
For normal people? No, the religious cops won't show up at your door. But for an envelope marked "Re: Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal?" Yeah, it'll get someone's attention.

PANEL THREE

Barak shoves the envelope through the Betrayer's Mouth. The exterior reads "Re: Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal" in magic marker.

BARAK (CAPTION)
You'd better be right, Colonel Santini.

PANEL FOUR

Guard room. Two video monitors show different scenes. In one, it's green nightvision-enhanced video surveillance -- an angled downshot of Barak walking away from camera across the open plaza. Another monitor has a still c/up of the name on the envelope, shot from above, like there's a camera on the wall above the mouth.

12 CONTINUED:

GUARD
(barely in panel)
Sir, we've got something you're going to want to see...

PAGE 13

PANEL ONE

Wide, not too tall. Establishing shot.

Santini's hotel room. Lights out. Moonlight stretches in the window, falling across the bed where Santini and Flint are lounging in bed.

FLINT
No... don't.

SANTINI
Shhh.

PANEL TWO

Santini and Flint are both nude. Santini kisses Flint's facial burns. Very intimate.

FLINT
No, stop, don't kiss my scars.

SANTINI
Shhhh.

FLINT
But they're so ugly!

PANEL THREE

Santini caresses her face. She's crying, but happy.

SANTINI
There's not a single ugly thing about you. Now shut up and kiss me.

FLINT
I've got something better in mind.

PANEL FOUR

Large panel. They're having sex, Flint on top, the sheet down low. She's a beautiful woman... have fun drawing her. In the bottom right corner of the panel, Tefibi bursts in the door.

TEFIBI
Colonel Santini, we've--

PANEL FIVE

Inset panel. C/U on an embarrassed Tefibi, eyes popping out of his head.

13 CONTINUED:

TEFIBI

--Uh oh.

SANTINI (O.S.)

You forget how to fucking knock?

PAGE 14

PANEL ONE

Tefibi turns his back. Santini gets out of bed, wrapping a sheet around his waist. He's angry. His chest and back should be marked here and there with bullet scars.

TEFIBI
Calm down, sir, I've seen it all before on the internet.

TEFIBI
Tell me you have a good reason for barging in here.

TEFIBI
Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal. He's on the move.

PANEL TWO

Flint steps up, fully dressed in her combat gear. Santini gives her an odd look.

FLINT
Where's he at?

SANTINI
(small text, an aside)
You get dressed too fast to really be a woman.

FLINT
(small text, an aside)
It's on account of me being a SUPER-woman.

PANEL THREE

Tefibi points to a computer-generated 3D map of Venice. There's a line heading from a small island in the Lagoon towards St. Marks.

TEFIBI
We tracked a boat moving into the city. I can only guess he's moving to rendezvous with us later in the day, like you asked on the tape.

SANTINI
Then I want Golovin and Pinckney in the St. Marks Belltower immediately. Why don't you go barge in on them having sex and tell them to start getting ready.

PANEL FOUR

Tefibi walks out, upset.

14 CONTINUED:

TEFIBI
(small font, grumbling as he walks out)
Jeez, pardon a guy for living. Maybe if everyone around here wasn't fucking like rabbits and simultaneously giving orders to wake them if anything happens, then they wouldn't get walked in on...

PANEL FIVE

Santini looks at Flint, one eybrow raised. She looks embarrassed.

SANTINI
(italics, quoting Tefibi)
"I've seen it all before on the internet?"

FLINT
My first StormWatch uniform was some kind of idiotic silver Battle-Thong. I had several unplanned wardrobe malfunctions which got caught on news cameras.

SANTINI
Ah-hah.

FLINT
Is it my fault that people post photos of my breasts on the internet?

SANTINI
Leave it to Tefibi to find them.

PANEL SIX

Flint licks Santini's ear. He's loving it.

SANTINI
Any chance you still have that costume in a closet somewhere?

FLINT
No chance in HELL.

SANTINI
That's...too bad. It might have come in handy for our meeting tomorrow.

GOLOVIN (O.S.)
(tiny font, but jaggy and angry)
Stalin's Balls, don't you ever knock, Tefibi?

PAGE 15

PANEL ONE

Big panel. St. Mark’s plaza, daytime, in the middle of Venice Carnival. A mixture of people in crazy outfits (see the reference section) and shorts-and-polo-shirt wearing tourists taking photos of them.

http://www.neystadt.org/john/album/venice-carnival/julia-and-crowd.jpg

In the middle of the panel stand three guys dressed along these lines...

http://www.carnivalofvenice.com/files/Gallery/Events/Carnival/2002/FEB10/Aut_8678.jpg

Their chests and arms are hidden by their cloaks. These 3 guys are Santini, Barak & a Mystery Guest.

We’re looking across the square and slightly upwards at St. Mark’s belltower. Nearby, a large man walks past in what looks like a Nascar Uniform with a Motorcycle Helmet on, covering his face. The Uniform is COVERED with familiar-looking logos for brands like “Porpsi” and “Monocal”. Across the chest is a HUGE RED X. This is GIANT in his new costume. He’s very important to the scene so we have to plant him early.

We also need to cheat a little bit... we’re going to put a clock in the belltower. There’s not one in reality, but hey, this is the Wildstorm Universe. The bells there ring every hour and that’s important later. Whenever you can between now and page 20, just throw a shot of the clock’s hands getting closer and closer to 12 noon.

CAPTION
St. Mark’s Plaza - 1146 hours

BARAK
Sir, it might be risky doing this here in the middle of a crowd. There is a threat of civilian casualties.

PANEL TWO

Santini looks down at Barak, his eyes glaring outwards from his golden mask.

SANTINI
Barak, that’s exactly WHY we’re doing it here out in the open. It’ll be harder for them to pull anything in direct sunlight.

15 CONTINUED:

SANTINI
God damn, this mask is killing me. How do these people breath in all this shit? This costume weighs more than a mountain ruck!

PANEL THREE

Santini takes off his golden mask and breathes deep. So does Barak. Their faces are all sweaty. Near them is a woman (Flint) dressed like this:
http://www.carnivalofvenice.com/files/Gallery/Events/Carnival/2002/FEB12/Aut_8899.jpg

BARAK
I thought you'd never let me take it off.

SANTINI
No wonder you superpeople go crazy if you gotta wear crap like this.

FLINT
At least it isn't a Battle Thong.

BARAK
I'm not even going to ASK what THAT meant.

PANEL FOUR

Downshot angle on St. Mark's plaza (see reference). A targeting reticle is focused onto the top of a man with long hair's head.

GOLOVIN (O.S.)
I have him.

PANEL FIVE

Golovin looking down the barrel of her rifle, pointing it out a narrow window in the turret of the Camponile Belltower (see reference page). Tefibi is next to her,

GOLOVIN
Big Brain, this is Eye in the Sky. Your appointment has arrived. Say the word and his brain becomes soup.

SANTINI (OVER RADIO)
Thank you, Eye in the Sky. Keep listening for our signal and keep an eye out for our second party.

PAGE 16

PANEL ONE

Santini and Barak stand in the middle of the square. Between them is the still-masked man, his arms still hidden by his cloak. Approaching them is Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal, the Jesus Looking Guy.

Juan José wears ratty jeans, leather sandals, and a long cableknit turtleneck sweater. It should all have a very “plain” and Jesus-y feel to it.

JUAN JOSÉ
Colonel Santini, I presume?

SANTINI
You’d be Senor Marticorena y Cajal. You’ll pardon me if I don’t shake--I’ve seen what your BROTHER’S hands are capable of.

JUAN JOSÉ
De Molay is NOT my brother. Instead of blood, we are inextricably bound by power... to my eternal regret.

PANEL TWO

Juan José, stopped a few feet from Santini. He shrugs. Move them closer and closer together for the duration of this next two pages... visually confirm that Santini is choosing this guy over the Merovingian.

SANTINI
You sound like you don’t like him.

JUAN JOSÉ
You say you fear The Merovingian’s hands. This means you have seen him kill.

JUAN JOSÉ
Can you tell me the chapter of the Bible where Christ kills his enemies?

PANEL THREE

Santini cocks an eyebrow. Behind him, a man walks past them in fancy Carnaval costume... but with Jaeger Weiss’ face mask instead of the impassionate Venetian masks.

JUAN JOSÉ
I assume he HAS hired YOU to KILL ME?

SANTINI
Yes. But before I do it, I thought I’d ask you why he wants you dead.

16 CONTINUED:

PANEL FOUR

Juan José gives an impassioned speech. GIANT in his Nascar Uniform walks past him in the BG.

JUAN JOSÉ
He is the current heir to his branch of our family tree. Each generation, one male is born with the power, halving that family's power until the father dies.

JUAN JOSÉ
Almost a thousand years ago, England invaded France and there was a splitting of the family tree. Two heirs were produced, each with half of the power of Christ.

JUAN JOSÉ
Since that time, The Merovingians and their wealthy enablers, the Priory of Sion, have sought to eliminate my family in order to concentrate that power back within one person.

JUAN JOSÉ
Last month De Molay and his group moved to Venice with the single goal of killing me.

PANEL FIVE

Santini shrugs. Juan makes a single big fist out of his hands by interlocking his fingers.

SANTINI
Why now? What's the rush?

JUAN JOSÉ
His father has recently died. He is twice as powerful as ever before. Neither of us has a son. The current Pope is near death's door.

JUAN JOSÉ
If de Molay can assimilate my power, he stands a chance of assuming the Holy Seat and unifying the world's Christian faiths as the natural heir to Christ.

JUAN JOSÉ
I cannot allow that to happen. It would be disastrous for Mankind.

PAGE 17

PANEL ONE

Barak sweeps open the silent Mystery Guest’s cloak. His arms are bound across his chest like a mummy. Barak holds his cloak open and jabs a short dagger to his side to prevent him from running.

Santini removes the Mystery Guest’s mask. Beneath it is The Merovingian, a piece of tape over his mouth.

SANTINI
So what would you do if I told you that you could buy him for a Billion dollars in Gold?

SANTINI
Would you like me to kill him for you?

PANEL TWO

Juan José looks closely into The Merovingian’s terrified eyes.

JUAN JOSÉ
No. I would prefer that you release him. Far away from me, of course.

SANTINI
Even though you KNOW he intends to KILL YOU?

JUAN JOSÉ
How does it go... ah yes.

PANEL THREE

Juan José turns and looks around at the crowd. A bright sparkler firework behind his head gives him a halo effect. Flint walks past him in her costume in the BG.

JUAN JOSÉ
(itals, quoting)
“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.”

JUAN JOSÉ
I choose to let him live. Goodbye, Colonel Santini.

PANEL FOUR

Sniper scope downshot on the square from the belltower. The sniper reticle is right over Juan José’s head. At the edge of the panel, Santini and Barak watch him walk away.

17 CONTINUED:

GOLOVIN
Big Brain, this is Eye in the Sky. Do you want me to take him, sir?

SANTINI (OVER RADIO)
Negative. Do not intercept, Eye in the Sky. We're letting him walk away. Any sign of the second half of our party?

GOLOVIN
Negative, sir.

PANEL FIVE

Santini and Barak relax. Barak sheathes his dagger. The "Merovingian" is really Codename Alias. His face has changed from The Merovingian into his skull-like face.

BARAK
Nice acting there, Patrick.

CODENAME ALIAS
What acting? I thought he would surely kill me. I can't believe he chose to let The Merovingian live.

SANTINI
Maybe he takes his family heritage more seriously than The Merovingian does. The more this thing unfolds, the more I feel we made a deal with the wrong brother.

GOLOVIN (OVER RADIO)
Big Brain, your second party has entered the plaza.

SANTINI
Okay, boys, zip it up.

PAGE 18

PANEL ONE

Big Panel. The arrival of The Merovingian and his entourage, five huge bodyguards. I like this costume for him:

http://www.abri-photos.com.fr/Carnaval.2/carn2.pag%2004/Joelle%20colonnes.H.jpg

And these type of costumes for his henchmen:

http://www.abri-photos.com.fr/Carnaval.2/carn2.pag%2004/Pascale%20V.jpg

MEROVINGIAN

Colonel Santini. I am here at your request. Do you have the belly-crawling worm?

PANEL TWO

C/U on Santini. He removes his mask. In the background, a man in Carnival costume which has a ripped up clothes and a marked-up mask walks past them (Jukko -- his mask is a torn-up face, just like his real one).

SANTINI

Yes. Before I bring him out, though, I'd like to ask you exactly why you want me to kill him?

PANEL THREE

The Merovingian removes his mask and gets up in Santini's face. He looks VERY angry.

MEROVINGIAN

I do not often welcome the questions of those who serve me, Colonel, but I will make an exception for THIS question.

MEROVINGIAN

I want Marticorena y Cajal dead because he has something which belongs to me and worse, he refuses to use it properly. A Catholic such as yourself must be familiar with the MYSTERIUM TREMENDUM?

SANTINI

"THE TREMENDOUS MYSTERY?" You're referring to God's almighty power?

PANEL FOUR

The Merovingian sneers. Behind him, the hands of the Bell Tower clock read 11:59.

18 CONTINUED:

MEROVINGIAN
Exactly. There is a yawning chasm that separates God and Man. Christians of past ages were much more familiar with this aspect of God than you are today. When they contemplated the glory of the ascended Christ, they often spoke of Him as REX TREMENDAE MAJESTATIS.

MEROVINGIAN
THE KING OF DREADFUL MAJESTY.

MEROVINGIAN
Yes. Tell me, Colonel, of what use is a KING who refuses to RULE?

PAGE 19

PANEL ONE

Santini removes The Mystery Guest's mask. Beneath it is the Jesus-like face of Juan José Camino Santiago Javier Marticorena y Cajal. It's also 12 noon, if you can manage to squeeze in the clock.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

SANTINI
So if I told you that he was yours to kill, you would say...?

PANEL TWO

The Merovingian stares at Santini and "Juan José" with a confused look on his face.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

MEROVINGIAN
I would say that this isn't him.

SANTINI
What?

PANEL THREE

The Merovingian looks around, suspicious.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

MEROVINGIAN
Do you think me some sort of fool? We can feel one another's power like a knife in the kidneys! Where is he? I sense he's nearby-

MEROVINGIAN
But if you can feel one another, then Marticorena...

PANEL FOUR

Santini shouts into his radio.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

19 CONTINUED:

SANTINI
Eye in the Sky, this is Big Brain, we've been played! Our first party guest is back at the ball and is considered hostile. Sweep and Clear!

PANEL FIVE

Up in the clocktower. The bells are ringing now and Pinckney and Golovin can't hear what Santini is saying. Pinckney has one hand over his ear, the other tightly presses his radio unit to his ear.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

PINCKNEY
(SHOUTING)
WHAT?

PAGE 20

PANEL ONE

Big Panel. The Merovingian throws his arms (with their costumed wings) straight out to the sides as Juan José dressed up like This Guy grabs his shoulder:

http://www.neystadt.org/john/album/venice-carnival/2-pairs-in-red-and-gold.jpg

The Merovingian explodes, burning from the inside out. Make it as gross as you can possibly stomach.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

PANEL TWO

Santini and Barak draw back in horror. Codename Alias makes like Mr. Fantastic and slithers out of his costume and bonds.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

BARAK
Now THIS is a major clusterfuck.

SANTINI
(shouting)
Close it up, people! Kill him NOW!

PANEL THREE

Pinckney shouting in Galena's ear.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

GOLOVIN
(SHOUTING)
WHO DO I SHOOT?

PINCKNEY
I DON'T KNOW! SHOOT EVERYBODY!

PANEL FOUR

Juan José stands over the dead body of the Merovingian. Ethereal energies stream from the corpse, wrapping themselves around Juan José. He grins like the madman he really is. Bullets stream down from the belltower, knocking down the Merovingian's bodyguards. The bullets going for Juan José turn into roses.

20 CONTINUED:

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

SOUND E/FX
(near the dead bodyguards' heads)
Shhhhhaaaak Shhhhhhaaaaak Shhhhhaaaak

PAGE 21

PANEL ONE

Jaeger and Jukko swing rifles out from underneath their gaudy costumes. Jukko's mask goes flying. Jaeger's using the XM8 machine gun. Jukko fires a SA58 OSW. (see reference pages). They pepper Juan José with Machine Gun Bullets. He smiles, energy surrounding him. The bullets turn to roses at his feet.

Feel free to throw in tons of civilan casualties all through these pages, btw. That's what would happen, so we should show some.

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

SOUND E/FX
(from Jukko's weapon)
BRAKBRAKBRAKBRAKBRAK

SOUND E/FX
(from Jaeger's weapon)
GugkGugkGugkGugkGugk

SANTINI
Flint, Patrick, GO GO GO!

PANEL TWO

Flint runs towards Juan José, fist raised to pound his brains out.

Alias springs at him, his arm extended, his first and pinky fingers extended and shaped like sharp knives headed for Juan José's eyes (exactly the kind of evil shit that Plastic Man or Mr. Fantastic would NEVER do).

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

PANEL THREE

Juan José raises his hand and Flint catches fire (like the guy on page two). Alias recoils like a rubber band from the flames.

SANTINI
FLIIIIINNNNNT!

PANEL FOUR

C/U on Juan José. He's grinning like a madman. He should have a round halo by now.

21 CONTINUED:

SOUND E/FX
(from the belltower)
Doonnnnngggg

JUAN JOSÉ
So what made you believe me over him, Santini? It was the beard and the hair, right? It's the family trademark. The best scam of all. Instant recognition and trust!

JUAN JOSÉ
Now... are you ready to KNEEL before your GOD?

PANEL FIVE

TIGHT C/U on Juan José. He looks VERY startled, his eyes bugging out.

JUAN JOSÉ
URK.

PAGE 22

PANEL ONE

The Helmeted Nascar Uniformed GIANT stands behind our false Christ. His arm is pushed through Juan José's body. In his clenched fist, he holds Juan José's heart. Juan Jose should look like one of those paintings of Jesus Christ's Sacred Heart (see reference). The heart isn't different than a normal heart, but he should be in that pose, with his eyes rolled heavenward, his hands pointing towards his chest, etc.

Juan José's flame-lightning covers GIANT, burning him. GIANT doesn't seem to notice.

GIANT
Hey, Santini. Bet you're not all pissed off that I showed up THIS time, huh?

PANEL TWO

Dead Juan José falls off to the side, dead. GIANT pulls off his helmet, exposing that face we all know and hate. He still holds Juan José's heart in his other hand.

SANTINI
Giant?

GIANT
Yeah! I mean...no. I got a new job, now. Working for a big corporation. They gave me a new name to go with it. You can call me...

PANEL THREE

GIANT strikes a toughguy comics pose.

GIANT
THE HALLIBASTARD!

TO BE CONTINUED!

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